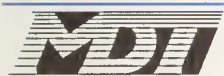


INTERchange



Employee Newsletter

February 1993

Director's Column



Transportation Director, Marv Dye

It's a pleasure and an honor to be selected by Governor Racicot to head the Montana Department of Transportation. In the few weeks I've been on the job, I've been confronted with a wide array of problems and issues and it's become even more apparent there's a great deal to learn and much to be done.

Coming in "cold" to a job like this, especially with the legislature in session, I have my hands full! So my attention is necessarily focused on the legislature and the issues that are, in part, external to the agency. I've met some of you, but for those of you I haven't met yet, I ask that you bear with me during this transition period. I look forward to meeting you and working with you on the important business that lies ahead.

Montana has a record of progress in transportation we can

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Strategic Action Plan Complete

MDT's Strategic Action Plan has been completed, and implementation is the next step in the process.

Between October 14 and November 9, employee representatives and the Executive Steering Committee met to work through details of the Plan.

Though the meetings were long and, at times difficult, the four day-long sessions served as forums where proposals were considered, discussed, and sometimes rewritten. Though not every proposal was adopted, the issues raised were often discussed in depth with advocacy coming from both Employee Committee chairs and the executive staff on the Steering Committee.

With Transportation Director Dye's approval and support, the Strategic Plan is now moving into implementation. The action planning document, though provisional until comments are received from the Advisory Committee, was distributed to the work units and the Employee Com-

mittee chairs on January 15. The approved objectives and tactics in this document will be discussed with the Advisory Committee on January 29.

Director Dye has made it clear he sees the Strategic Action Plan as a positive beginning and that the strategic planning process will be used to address issues confronting the department as well as employee concerns.

The Strategic Plan began early last year with a survey which was sent to all department employees and various other private and public individuals. The survey rated the MDT's performance on a wide range of topics.

Survey results were then distributed to employees and were used as the basis of an extensive series of employee and administrator meetings culminating in the Strategic Action Plan.

If questions arise or if additional copies of the Strategic Action Plan are needed, contact Sandy Straehl, Strategic Plan Coordinator, at 444-7692.

A look at the new Director

Marv Dye joined the cabinet of Governor Marc Racicot as Director of the Department of Transportation January 4. He succeeds John Rothwell, who served under former Governor Stan Stephens since October of 1990.

Prior to his appointment, Dye served as Administrator of the Forensic Science Division of the Montana Department of Justice for three and one half years; as well as Auditor, Bureau Chief and Acting Division Administrator, respectively, over a fifteen year period for the Crime Control Division of the Montana Department of Justice. Prior to that, he was an auditor for the Montana Legislative Auditor's Office.

Dye earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting from Montana State University in 1973. He's received extensive continuing education since in the areas of audit, management and planning.

Dye is a native of Montana and spent his early years in the Cut Bank-Sweetgrass area. Prior to attending MSU, he was an automobile service station owner, a grocery manager and meat cutter. Dye is married with four grown children.

A parting note: John Rothwell

A note of appreciation is in order to all the employees of MDT for the support you gave me during the past two years. The organization went through tremendous change during my tenure, including the change to a true Department of Transportation. Without the dedication and support of a great many super employees, it couldn't have been done.

I especially appreciate your help in educating this private sector outsider, who, without your support, could have done very little. I hope I brought some new ideas to each of you, ideas that will help in your tenure with MDT and help the customers we all serve.

I've enjoyed the time spent with you and the many new friends I've made. Thanks again and best of luck.

John Rothwell

Injury Alert

In the last two months, MDT employees submitted 35 Workers' Compensation claims of which eleven were caused by slips and falls—common winter accidents.

Back injuries were the most common but injuries ranged from ankle to skull.

Maintenance reported eight injuries, engineering two and building maintenance one. Six required medical treatment and five of these were lost time.

Causes:

- lack of attention to footing and surroundings,
- slick soled shoes,
- incorrect use of equipment.

To help avoid slips and falls:

- use step stools rather than standing on the sides of vehicles,
- kick snow and ice off of truck steps before getting out, and use hand holds to enter or exit,
- check your footing before climbing on or off of equipment,
- walk carefully on uneven or steep slopes,
- wear shoes or boots with non-slip soles,
- wipe your feet when entering buildings or equipment.

These injuries cost MDT thousands of dollars in medical and compensation benefits and also have a price in lost productivity and human suffering. *Please stop and think; slips and falls are preventable.*

More than a Memo

Archives give glimpse of MDT's past

"History is the witness that testifies to the passing of time; it illuminates reality, vitalized memory, provides guidance in daily life."

—Cicero

History buffs would have enjoyed Patti Borsberry's recent assignment. She, with the generous help of Jan Schutt, examined over 650 MDT highway project files dating back to the 1920s and '30s which were sent in from the field offices.

The day-to-day language was more cordial and versed back then. They addressed each other with "herewith" and "foreto." One gentleman, at the end of a letter regarding engineering concerns, informed our commissioner he would be in town for a community meeting and perhaps the commissioner would care to join them for an evening of cards. Another project file contained correspondence about a woman who had popped her tire on a road marker and she felt the department ought to replace her tire "or else." In the end, her tire was not replaced " ... we were not in that line of business."

There were records dealing with pay and labor concerns with the U.S. Works Program during the depression. Weekly payroll records were as low as \$1965.57 for 81 employees. Two gentlemen were sent to work but fired for showing up drunk at the work camp. Land was purchased for \$11 to \$100.00, depending whether it was barren or cultivated. Even through the change of times, there are project records still being generated; contract and bond, plan-in-hands, progress estimates, pit reports, special provisions, among others.

Other items found were leather tabbed file folders, odd shaped paper clips, old photos of Missoula's Orange Street bridge with the courthouse in the background and onionskin documents.

These records helped support research done by our department's historians, along with sparking interest from the state and local archivists.

Tom Barnard, among others, opted to retain files for highways that have not been rebuilt. Yes, we're still driving on highways built in the 1920s and 1930s! The remaining records and photos were transferred to State Archives to aid in the preservation of our department's memory; provide production information, policy direction, personnel and financial information and provide legal advantage and research service; plus prepare commemorative histories.

Mail Call

January 4, 1993

I have just returned from a two-week trip to Seattle and I drove both ways. This was a bad time of year for a lot of the roads between Butte, MT and Seattle, WA, but I must tell you that I could tell by the condition of the roads when I left the state of Montana and when I returned to Montana. The roads I traveled on were very well maintained in the state of Montana, and although driving in winter time is not always a pleasure, my trip was very easy due to the excellent work of the road crews of western Montana. Your employees did a great job, and I needed to tell you about it.

Dorothy M. Sternod
Butte, MT

New Helena office address

No, we haven't moved, but the MDT headquarters has a new mailing address to get the most benefit from the US Postal Service's electronic mail routing.

The new address should read:

**MONTANA DEPARTMENT
OF TRANSPORTATION
2701 PROSPECT AVE
PO BOX 201001
HELENA MT 59620-1001**

For best results, mail should be addressed:

- in all capital letters,
- with no punctuation,
- single spaced,
- with the ZIP code on the last line,
- with the PO Box (or address) on the next to last line,
- with the address, and nothing else in the bottom 2 3/4 inches of the envelope.

Don't forget to use the new address for mail to headquarters and as a return for mail from the headquarters. For more information on mailing or to receive a envelope addressing template call the mail room in Helena at 444-6324.

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be proud of. Improvements on our highways have been substantial over the past decade. State support of 13 general aviation airports, the Essential Air service, and the aggressive transit program, coordinating with over 100 community agencies, helps provide Montanans access to transportation in a state where "getting around" has important and sometimes difficult implications.

I'm committed to the strategic planning process and to putting to work the results of the substantial employee effort aimed at improving the organization and the way we carry out our business. I firmly believe the only value any plan has is in its implementation.

One tactic or initiative I've endorsed and intend to emphasize is a participatory management style. It's a style I'm personally familiar with and comfortable with—I know it works and I look forward to the challenge of making it work at MDT.

I think most of you are aware the department and the administration are supporting an increase in fuel taxes. And that support is for good cause. In 1993, Montana begins paying \$17 million per year to retire bonds which financed the majority of the state financed Reconstruction Trust Fund Program carried out during the 1980s. And it's important we take advantage of the available federal-aid and continue the transportation improve-

Billings District News

Lutke honored

Douglas E. Lutke received MDT's prestigious honor of Maintenance Man of the Year recently. Doug has been with the department since 1970 when he started as an engineering aide, then moved to maintenance and was recently promoted to Maintenance Chief for Lewistown. In evaluating accomplishments which make him stand out, it was evident that it is not only the "big things" that make Doug so special, but rather an accumulation of the various "little" actions. He consistently displays a cheerful, helpful attitude regardless of the task, he communicates and relates to his crews and co-workers with ease and has excellent training capabilities due to his broad understanding of various jobs.

Doug exceeds normal expectation and takes on many new challenges including the underground storage tank update program, serving on personnel selection committees, designing the re-

modeling and new construction for the Lewistown buildings and unselfish giving of his own time to the Department.

We can always count on Doug to follow through on a project to its completion in a professional and competent manner. The District is proud to have such a dedicated and supportive employee receive this honor.

Grinde honored

The Billings District takes great pride in announcing that Rodney Grinde was selected recently to receive the Governor's Award for Excellence on State Employee Recognition Day.

Rod is a 27-year MDT veteran who is currently the district's Utility Agent and is responsible for coordinating all utility activities within the district's approximate 40,000 square miles. His schedule has been extremely busy with projects including three major utility

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ment program begun in the '80s. A substantial budget increase in the maintenance program is also part of our legislative proposal, in order to meet expanding responsibilities and bolster the budget that's been eroded over the years by inflation and new costs.

Rapid changes in transportation are occurring nationally, as well as in Montana. The new federal surface transportation law enacted by Congress in December of 1991 significantly alters federal-aid highway funding and systems. Approval of free trade agreements with Canada and Mexico present opportunities and challenges as well, in international trade and, therefore, in transportation.

As I wrote in my letter to the 53rd Legislative session introducing our most recent legislative report, Montana's economy will grow and expand, but only if we have the infrastructure in place to handle that expansion. Transportation is essential. And so I'm eager and ready to help the department and the state meet this challenge. We all play a role, we're all involved to some degree, and I look forward to working with you and the citizens of our state on the important tasks that lie ahead.

*Marv Dye
Director of Transportation*

Service Awards

Service Awards were presented in the following categories:

40 years

Glen Enderson.

35 years

James T. Brown, David S. Johnson.

30 years

Gerald L. Anders, S. Dale Arthun, Jerry R. Branum, Robert C. Chapman, David C. Lloyd, Gerald E. Mans, Kenneth L. Noble, Kenneth J. Peterson.

25 years

Chester E. Ahlin, Kenneth E. Blush, John M. Giles, Norman C. Kerr, Gary W. Marten, Ervin L. Predmore, William B. Stephenson.

20 years

Marilyn J. D'Arcy, Dennis R. Dupre, Ronald R. Elings, John P. Evans, Rudolph C. Gerke, Robert E. Gorsich, Margene A. Grose, Marilyn P. Howeth (deceased), Marvin E. Mosby, L. Herman Streck, Stephen E. Warn, Leroy V. Wolff.

15 years

Scott W. Allen, Mark L. Baum, Paul W. Bronson, Daniel P. Callahan, Phillip N. Davis, John Delaurenti, Martin D. Draper, Wayne A. Dunning, Thomas Q. Erving, David A. Galt, Jason R. Giard, Kenneth W. Gooding, Patrick J. Hamper, Dean William Harris, Robert W. Johnson, Allen W. Levens, Robert W. McLatchy, Jay E. McPhail, Timothy D. Merritt, Robert A. Miotke, Thomas P. Nicholson, Charles A. Papke, Richard W. Saltzman, George M. Stanich, Berdene M. Steen, James R. Strum, Cyril A. Tuss, Duyen Van Hoang, Jacqueline R. Williams, Donald C. Woodland.

10 years

Chester F. Baldry, Corey D. Davis,

James A. Delaney, Stephen F. Garrison, Martin F. Gauer, Louis G. Gonzalez, Ronald K. Ingersoll, Ronald J. Joslyn, Susan I. Keeting, Susan J. Kissinger, Roger D. McCaffree, Chris M. O'Neill, Stephen T. Palmer, Thomas H. Simpson, Stuart F. Sorensen, James R. Vukasin.

5 years

Debra J. Bowey, Paul W. Branum, Douglas L. Burner, Mark R. Casenovember, Jerilee J. Davidson, Harlan R. Davis, Lorrie M. Duncan, Kevin L. Farry, Joseph H. Fehrer, Matthew J. Golz, Thomas M. Heggelund, Ralph E. Howard, Walter F. Jester, Gene S. Kammerman, Richard Krantz, Michael A. Lindquist, Denley M. Loge, Jay C. Lyndes, Monte H. Makin, Ross H. Martin, Gerald S. Michel, John K. Nielsen, Donald A. Reidelbach, Stephen B. Salusso, Beth A. Scofield, Delbert J. Sell, Traci P. Steen, Michael H. Tennant, Michael G. Teter, Roger M. Tinder, Lesly-Rae Tribelhorn, Edrie L. Vinson, Brian T. Watts, Larry W. Yerian.

Retirements

Shirley Netteberg, Whitefish, Survey Aid.
Marvin Rau, Billings, Working Shop Foreman.

Larry Young, Hot Springs, Equipment Operator,.

Duane Olson, Belt, Truck Driver.
Fred Hasskamp, Helena, Training Supervisor.

Gerald Olson, Townsend, Field Supervisor.

Clarence Root, Miles City, Equipment Operator.

Kenneth Rapp, Butte, District Engineer.

Editor's Note:

As we introduce the new Director with this edition of the Interchange, we're also planning for new features in coming editions. Beginning next month, we'll be including project lists from upcoming bid lettings to let you know what's planned for the construction season. We'll also re-cap plans for the spring and summer maintenance program. And we'll be featuring stories on some interesting aspects of the MDT organization, including the newer members of the "family". These features are the result of recommendations in the new strategic plan.

The Highwayman

Up by seven,
Donuts by eight;
Our highwayman can never escape.
The wind will blow,
And the snow will fall,
For he is at our beck and call.
Potholes and detours, bumps and tar,
Give that highwayman a call, he's not far.
Tell him your problems,
Tell him your woes,
But please remember; he already knows.
We owe him a thanks,
We owe him a shirt,
Because without him, our roads would be
Dirt!
—Stacey Moeller

Stacey's father, Doug, is Kalispell's maintenance superintendent, having worked for MDT 19 years. So, she knows the demands placed on our employees in the field.

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river crossings, equal in value to approximately all other utility relocations in the state and more complex than most.

Rod always deals with each task effectively and professionally regardless of its complexity and addresses everyone with a positive and professional attitude.

Rod certainly demonstrates the professional attitude in his quality of work exemplified by an outstanding employee. Congratulations Rod!

INTERchange

Employee Newsletter

The employee newsletter is published by the Public Affairs Bureau, Montana Department of Transportation:

Interchange staff:
Sean Seville
Dennis Unsworth

The following contributed articles for this issue:

Sandy Strachl
Jo Eshler
Diane Letendre
Organizational Development Bureau

Submissions and correspondence should be addressed to:

Public Affairs Bureau
2701 Prospect Avenue
PO Box 201001
Helena, MT 59620-1001
(406) 444-6200